Short fall in monsoon

3918. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Meteorological Department has predicted a shortfall in monsoon this year;

(b)if so, the estimated shortfall in rains this year;

(c) whether this shortfall in rains shall have an adverse affect on agriculture production in the country and particularly States where the shortfall in rains is expected;

(d) how far such a declaration of shortfall of rains shall have an adverse affect on the cost/price of agriculture products; and

(e) the efforts expected to be taken for an artificial rain in the country during that period?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indian Meteorological Department s (IMD) operational Long Range Forecast for the 2006 South-West monsoon season (June-September) is that the rainfall for the country as a whole is likely to be 93% of the Long Period Average (LPA) with a model error of + 5%.

Estimates also suggest that the probability for the 2006 South-West Monsoon Season rainfall over the country as a whole to be deficient (below 90% of LPA) is only 22%.

(c) and (d) About 40% of area under crops in the country is irrigated, 60% of area depend on rains for production of crops. Therefore, shortfall in rains of various nature will adversely affect agricultural production. It is, however, too early to say which States will be affected by shortfall of rains and how far cost/price of agricultural products will be affected as spatial and temporal distribution of monsoon rainfall over different regions of the country cannot be predicted with the existing infrastructure of IMD.

(e) Central Government has no plans of invoking artificial rain